

CLAIMS

1. A security aware apparatus including processor means responsive to connection of electrical power to create a data message which uniquely identifies the apparatus, electronic transfer means for transmitting the data message to a pre determined address and electronic receiver means for receiving a response to the transmitted message, the apparatus further including a data store for storing data including at least one release code, the processor means being arranged to cause temporary inoperability of the apparatus unless a response message characterising at least in part the respective release code is received within a predetermined period.
2. A security aware apparatus as claimed in claim 1 in which the electronic transfer means adds a network address to the data message and transmits the message by way of a connectionless network using internet protocol.
3. A security aware apparatus as claimed in claim 1 in which the electronic transfer means creates an electronic mail message which is transmitted to a mailbox associated with an associated remote control centre.
4. A security aware apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim in which the electronic receiver means has an address on a connectionless network to which messages are transmitted by an associated remote control centre.
5. A security aware apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1, 2 or 3 in which the apparatus has an associated mailbox address from which electronic mail messages are periodically down loaded.
6. A remote control centre for use in a security system, the centre including processor means for determining release codes for each of a plurality of security aware apparatuses, a data store for storing the codes determined, electronic monitoring means to capture electronic messages on a connectionless network, such messages originating from security aware apparatus, and electronic transmitting

means for transmitting messages embodying respective release codes to requesting apparatus on a connectionless network.

7. A remote control centre as claimed in claim 6, the centre having a point of presence on a connectionless network, the monitoring means monitoring for messages at the point of presence.

8. A remote control centre as claimed in Claim 6 associated with an electronic mailbox, the monitoring means periodically recovering electronic mail messages embodying release code requests from said mailbox.

9. A remote control centre as claimed in any one of claims 6, 7 or 8 in which the electronic transmitting means transmits electronic message data by way of the connectionless network directly to an address of requesting apparatus.

10. A remote control centre as claimed in any one of claims 6, 7 or 8 in which the electronic transmitting means creates an electronic mail message including the release code(s) and causes the message to be transmitted to a mailbox address associated with requesting apparatus.

11. A remote control centre as claimed in any one of claims 6 to 10 in which the release codes associated with security aware apparatus are grouped in accordance with associated home control units, the receiving means receiving electronic messages from home control units and the transmitting means returning multiple respective release codes using electronic messaging by way of a connectionless network.

12. A home control unit responsive to requests from associated security aware apparatus to provide a release code to such apparatus, the home control unit including a data store for storing, in respect of each associated apparatus release codes for that apparatus and including first receiver means for receiving release requests from associated apparatus and first transmitting means for transmitting release codes to such apparatus, the home control unit further including means to

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10 14. A home control unit as claimed in claim 12 or claim 13 in which the second transmitting means forwards the electronic message to an electronic mailbox associated with the remote control centre.

16 A home control unit as claimed in any one of claims 12,13 or 14c in which
20 the first transmitting means transmits release codes to security aware apparatus
using low power radio transmission.

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30 19. A home control unit as claimed in any one of claims 12 to 18 in which the first receiving means monitors a mains electrical circuit for signals superimposed thereon by security aware apparatus.

21. A home control unit as claimed in claim 20 in which the radio receiver
5 operates in accordance with DECT protocols and standards.

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